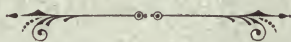




MAR 29
1892

In Memoriam.



→ SAMUEL & J. & TILDEN ←





Memorial Services

IN HONOR OF

SAMUEL J. TILDEN

AT THE

CALIFORNIA THEATRE,

WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 20, 1886.

Wilson 2 m

Under the auspices of the California State Democratic Club.

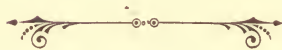
SAN FRANCISCO:

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1886.

Programme.

Marcia Funebre,	-	" <i>Sulla Morte d'un Eroe</i> ,"	-	BEETHOVEN
Prelude,	.	-	" <i>L' Africane</i> ,"	- - MEYERBEER
<i>Poem</i> ,	-	-	-	DANIEL O'CONNELL, ESQ.
Selection,	-	-	" <i>Stabat Mater</i> ,"	- - ROSSINI
<i>Oration</i> ,	-	-	-	HON. SAMUEL M. WILSON
Largo,	-	-	" <i>in G</i> ,"	- - HANDEL
March,	-	-	" <i>Prophete</i> ,"	- - MEYERBEER





IN MEMORIAM.

BY DANIEL O'CONNELL, ESQ.

WHEN the toiler in the morning goes forth to sow the seed,
His brown hands full of garnered grain, and his footsteps free and bold;
Through all his weary labor he is thinking of the meed,
When Autumn's russet mantle shall the teeming earth unfold.

The ploughshare shapes the furrow, the seed is scattered wide,
And the Winter rains fall kindly upon the thirsty field,
And the toiler's heart is gladdened, as he contemplates with pride
The rich reward of labor his harvesting shall yield.

'Midst the singing of the sailors, across the harbor bar,
The tall ship moves, her gliding keel the foaming waters spurn,
And many watch her progress, and bless her from afar—
Their farewells filled with yearning for the noble bark's return.

But that gallant ship is stricken by the storm, and the wreck
The hurricane has driven upon the iron shore,
And drowned men are lying upon her shattered deck,
And they who watched her from the port shall never see her more.

And the harvest for the reaper is nought but tare and weed,
For the heavens withheld their moisture; there was nought but drought
and frost;

Not a single blade of corn is born from the seed,
And the labor of the husbandman is futile all and lost.

But patiently he sows the grain and trusts another year,
And gallantly another ship goes forth upon the sea,
And the sailor's sturdy bosom a stranger is to fear,
And the husbandman looks forward to his harvest from the lea.

Ah ! such was he, the statesman, the great, the honored dead.

Who for many a well-sown harvest reaped nought but tare and weed,
Saw many a gallant ship go down but never bowed his head,
Still sending ships upon the sea, still sowing the good seed.

Oh, mind above all selfish ends! oh, true, majestic soul!

In the hour of party triumph you passed away to God;
And the bells that rang our pæan were mingled with the toll
Of the funeral bells that thrilled us, when they placed you 'neath the sod.

Beyond ambition's promptings, beyond the fair reward

Of those who loved and praised him, he held the Nation's peace,
And he drank the bitter chalice, and though the task was hard,
He calmed an angry faction, and bade the storm to cease.

O, patriot heart, that steadfastly in that fierce, threatening time,

When wrong was bold and rampant, and when a single word
Would have plunged the land in conflict, with sacrifice sublime
Resigned thy well-won laurels, and sheathed the half-drawn sword.

Thou art gone from us, the leader, the learned and the sage.

After years of fruitless sowing you saw the harvest wave.
In the story of our statesmen thou shalt have a brilliant page,
And a Nation, not a party, shall weep above thy grave.





The Oration.

BY HON. SAMUEL M. WILSON.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Time in his onward and ceaseless course carries each moment to the grave some human victim. This common fate of mankind in the great mass of cases passes with but little notice. There may be a few relatives who sincerely mourn their loss, a few devoted friends who sorrow for their departed companion; but the community at large is not only without a sensation, but generally without even a knowledge of the event. It is only at great intervals that there occurs a death which produces a sensation in a great nation, and concentrates thought, reflection and contemplation upon the memory of one man. Such a rare occurrence has but recently happened in the death of SAMUEL J. TILDEN, and has excited the attention of this vast country of upwards of fifty millions of people. Under its influence we are gathered here this evening to do honor to the memory of that distinguished man and eminent statesman, and to recall those great traits of character and beneficent acts of public service and patriotism which make his

"One of the few, the immortal names,
That were not born to die."

A history of the United States that did not give a large space to the great national Democratic party would be but a false and delusive story; and a history of that great party that did not give a large space to the life, acts and teachings of Mr. TILDEN would be equally deficient in one important era of our national existence.

SAMUEL JONES TILDEN was born in the town of New Lebanon, County of Columbia, State of New York, on the 15th

of March, 1814, and died on the 2d day of August, 1886. He descended from old Puritan stock; and though far removed from the causes and surroundings which gave that people its marked and peculiar traits, he seemed to have inherited that sturdiness of purpose, inflexibility of will, high sense of morality, unswerving integrity and robust intellect so characteristic of the Puritan. Those great qualities, so potential in the days of the colonists, have been not less powerful in the later days of their descendants, though softened by the genial influence of secured liberty, and exercised more rationally under the benign spirit of an enlightened Government.

Some biographers of Mr. TILDEN have traced his genealogy back to distinguished ancestors in England; some to Colonel John Jones, one of the regicide judges of Charles I.; some make a connection by affinity between the ancestors of his mother and Oliver Cromwell and John Hampden. But, however this may be, the friends of Mr. TILDEN, looking at his own character and history, may well say in the language of Shakspeare:

"Honors best thrive,
When rather from our acts we them derive,
Than our foregoers."

Or, in the words of another poet:

"The fame which a man wins for himself is best—
That he may call his own."

THE STATESMAN'S EARLY LIFE.

Mr. TILDEN, while yet a boy and even before entering college, imbibed a taste for the study of public affairs, and was an attentive listener at his father's house to the discussion of political principles and measures by prominent men in New York. In the fall of 1832, when General Jackson was a second time a candidate for the Presidency, with Mr. Van Buren for Vice-President and William L. Marcy for Governor of New York, Mr. TILDEN, then in his nineteenth year, wrote

an article of such great power that it was published in the *Albany Argus* as a public address, signed by a number of leading Democrats; and such was its intrinsic merit that it was by many believed to be the work of Martin Van Buren. This article so much impressed Washington Irving, to whom it was shown by Mr. Van Buren at Kinderhook, that he requested to be introduced to Mr. TILDEN that he might know the author.

It was after this he commenced his collegiate career and from that passed to the law school and thence to the Bar. But during the stirring times of General Jackson's second term and the succeeding term of Mr. Van Buren, Mr. TILDEN was an ardent supporter of both, and equally by his pen and tongue vindicated them and the great measures of the Democratic party of those days. He entered earnestly and warmly into the campaign which made Mr. Polk President of the United States and Silas Wright Governor of New York, and appeared in the role of the editor of a newspaper called the *Daily News*, which he conducted with great ability and success.

HIS FIRST ENTRANCE INTO PUBLIC LIFE.

Mr. TILDEN's first entrance into public life was in 1845, as a member of the Legislature from the City of New York, followed speedily by his election to the Constitutional Convention in 1846. In both of these positions he was very active and efficient and exhibited much of that intellectual power, firmness of purpose and unyielding integrity for which he was always so famous. His participation in these public affairs and his great devotion to the service of the Democratic party brought him early into the society and fellowship of the great statesmen and public men of New York; and from his boyhood to his death he maintained their respect, admiration and sincere friendship.

But notwithstanding Mr. TILDEN's great aptitude for public life and his early knowledge of political affairs, he was com-

pelled by the great demand for his legal services to devote himself for some years almost exclusively to his professional duties at the bar. He speedily rose to the highest rank at the bar of New York, always renowned for the ability, learning and high moral standing of its leading members.

HIS MERITS AND SUCCESS AS A LAWYER.

It were almost endless to tell of the many triumphs achieved by Mr. TILDEN at the bar.

There are many places in life where a pretender may deceive. The quack may for a time play the role of a learned and able physician; the hypocrite may enter the pulpit and create a belief in his saintliness; the politician, without merit, ability or honesty, may by plot and intrigue climb to places of honor; the blustering of a superficial officer may temporarily deceive his soldiers:—but the bar is the place where the pretender is at once detected and exposed. Rich friends and influential relatives may lend their aid and strive to create an unmerited reputation, but it is all in vain. The bar of a great city is a critic of its members, not to be blinded, cajoled, deceived or intimidated. It measures each man at his true worth. As the swordsman, training with his fellow, well knows the man of strong arm, iron wrist, keen eye and consummate skill, so does the lawyer know to a certainty his fellow-member.

He well knows the skill, the learning, the power and resources of counsel, whether he appears with him as a colleague or against him as opponent. To learn the character of the lawyer, whether it be for his learning, his ability or his moral attributes, ask his fellow-members of the bar. They know the difference between pretense and reality; between fiction and truth. When, therefore, it is said that Mr. TILDEN was ranked by the bar itself among its ablest, most worthy and distinguished members, you have a standard and criterion of worth that never errs.

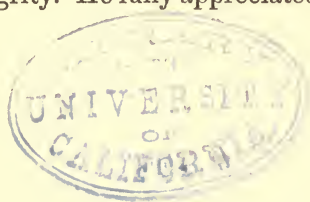
At the bar Mr. TILDEN was always an untiring student.

His capacity for profound labor was immense; his resources almost without limit. He was absolutely thorough. He came to the trial of a case with nothing undiscovered; nothing upon which he had not reflected; nothing upon which he was not prepared. With this he joined a great command of language and most convincing logic. He was terse, clear, straightforward and earnest. With him the practice of law was the pursuit of the truth and right of a case, by a thorough presentation of facts and the application of broad principles of a great system of enlightened jurisprudence. He moved as a well-drilled, well-equipped and well-supplied army moves on to a battle; and making no mistakes, falling into no ambuscade, attacks and defeats the enemy by its own sturdy prowess and resistless weight.

The same methods were pursued by him in his prosecution of any study. Were it a political subject, he sought the underlying elementary doctrines of political economy; but, not standing on mere theory, he made such a practical and sensible application of them as is made in geometry by the use of established maxims in the solution of a problem. On great financial questions his studies were exhaustive and his knowledge wonderful. With him it was a lifetime work, and his writings on these topics are indisputable evidence of his pre-eminent ability and storehouses of most valuable information.

HIS LOVE FOR THE UNION IN THE CIVIL WAR.

With all these eminent qualities Mr. TILDEN united a sincere admiration of our form of government, and was a devoted lover of his country. When the great Civil War came, there could be no doubt what course he would pursue or whose cause he would espouse: he was a Jacksonian, anti-nullification Democrat. Before the war he was opposed to all aggressive measures against the guaranteed rights of the South, and stood by the compromises embodied in the Federal Constitution in their full integrity. He fully appreciated



what a war between the North and South would be, and sought to avoid it by all honorable means; but when that startling event came, he immediately espoused the cause of the grand old Union. In this, as in all things, he advocated measures at once thorough, bold and efficient. At a meeting of Union men at the house of General Dix, after Mr. Lincoln had made the call for 75,000 men, Mr. TILDEN, appreciating better than any one else present the magnitude of the impending crisis, advocated a call for 500,000 men, one half to be put into immediate service, and the other half to be kept in reserve, ready in case of necessity. Had this strong movement been made and this prompt and decisive action been taken, it is to be believed that several States then hanging in doubt would not have seceded, and that the war would have speedily ended. Subsequently, Mr. TILDEN was invited to Washington by the Government, and his advice solicited as to the future conduct of the war. His advice then was to overwhelm the South through the vastly greater numbers at the command of the North, and its superior military resources, and by great concentration at vital points.

It was a matter of profound regret, subsequently expressed by the Secretary of War, that the advice of Mr. TILDEN had not been followed. Throughout the whole crisis he was a thoroughly sound Union man, never flinching in the support of the Government; but when the war was ended he was for a general amnesty, not in name merely but in very fact. Contending that the Southern States could not go out of the Union, he insisted at the end of the war that they were still in the Union and should be treated with a magnanimity becoming a great nation.

HE MAKES WAR ON THE TWEED RING.

One of the most important and interesting events in the life of Mr. TILDEN was his share in the contest with what was called the "Ring" of New York City, or, more familiarly, the "Tweed Ring." Most persons posted on current events

knew at the time the general features of this renowned institution; but, as important matters rapidly succeed each other in this country, and the material things of yesterday are eclipsed and effaced by the events of to-day, it may not be amiss, on this occasion, to recall briefly some of the prominent facts of this memorable struggle.

Mr. Charles O'Connor, the very eminent and distinguished New York lawyer, lent his most valuable and powerful aid to Mr. TILDEN and others, in the great battle with the "Ring." Writing, in 1875, about it, Mr. O'Connor gives the following very graphic account: "At a period not very remote, certain trading politicians discovered that the City of New York might be made the Golconda of fraudulent cupidity. Vicious legislation was brought into their service for a price, and by its use they had attained, in the year 1871, much power and measureless audacity. All the local patronage came under the control of four officials by laws of their own framing. They were Hall, Mayor; Connolly, Comptroller; Tweed, Commissioner of Public Works; and Sweeney, President of the Department of Public Parks. Tweed, whom common fame recognized under the designation 'Boss,' as chief of this quartette, enjoyed a plurality of benefices. He was President of the Board of Supervisors and a State Senator. Unwilling to rely upon the rule which enjoins 'honor among thieves,' the quartette, as they were called, made unanimity among themselves indispensable to the working of their machinery.

THE RING'S ENORMOUS POWER.

"At this time the quartette had almost complete control over the local officers, and each of them was studiously protected, by the requisite of unanimity before mentioned, from any adverse action by any or all of his three equals. Local officers were in the main selected from an organization controlled by them; the Corporation Counsel could not institute actions on his own motion; and in this respect one of them absolutely controlled him. William M. Tweed, Jr., son of the 'Boss,' was Assistant District Attorney.

"They had reduced nine daily papers and nine weekly papers to the condition of stipendiaries, by an act, designed, though perhaps without entire success, to muzzle the Press, that potent foe of tyranny."

In reference to this Ring, Mr. TILDEN himself says: "The Ring was doubly a ring. It was a ring between the six Republican Supervisors and the six Democratic Supervisors. It soon grew to a ring between the Republican majority [in the Legislature] in Albany and the half-and-half Supervisors and a few Democratic officials of the City of New York.

"The very definition of a ring is, that it encircles enough influential men in the organization of each party to control the action of both party machines—men who in public push to extremes the abstract ideas of their respective parties, while they secretly join hands in schemes for personal power and profit."

THE TWEED CHARTER.

The great culminating act by which the "Ring" received its greatest power and security and sought to prolong its existence was the passage of the "Tweed Charter," on the 5th day of April, 1870, which Mr. TILDEN characterized as "the passage of the Act granting New York City to the 'Ring.'" This continued Tweed in office until April, 1874, and Connolly and Sweeney until 1875. Mr. TILDEN proceeds to say: "They, with the Mayor, were vested with the exclusive legal power of appropriating all moneys raised by taxes or by loans, and an indefinite authority to borrow. Practically they held all power of municipal legislation and all power of expending as well as appropriating moneys. They had filled the departments with their dependents for terms equally long.

"They wielded the enormous patronage of offices and contracts. They swayed all the institutions of local government—the local judiciary * * * in a word, everything below the Court of Appeals. They also controlled the whole machinery of elections. New York City with its million of

people, with its concentration of vast interests of individuals in other States and in foreign countries, with its conspicuous position before the world, had practically no power of self-government. It was ruled and was to be ruled as long as the terms of these officers continued—from four to eight years—as if it were a conquered province.”

AN IMMENSE SYSTEM OF BRIBERY.

It has since been established beyond all doubt that all of this was effected by an immense system of bribery and corruption. Judge Noah Davis, one of the most reliable Judges of New York—a gentleman of high standing and character—ascertained from a well-known leader of the lobby that the price paid to six leading Republican Senators was, to each, \$10,000 for the passage of the “Tweed Charter,” and \$5,000 for kindred bills of the session, and \$5,000 more for similar services the next year.

Among these was an Act creating a Board of Special Audit, and very shortly after the passage of the Act, this board audited and ordered paid \$6,000,000. Of this enormous sum only about 33 per cent. went to the mechanics and tradesmen, who furnished the materials and performed the services charged for. Tweed took 24 per cent., Woodward, his agent, Watson, Deputy Controller, and Sweeney, took each seven per cent. The sum of \$250,000 went as a corruption fund to Albany and was distributed to Senators and members of the Lower House.

Mr. Tilden says: “None but the ‘Ring’ then knew that in the secret recesses of the Supervisors and other similar bureaus were hid ten millions of bills largely fraudulent, and that in the prospective were eighteen other millions, nearly all fraudulent.

* * * * *

“As the times advanced the percentages of theft mixed in the bills grew. Moderate in 1869, they reached sixty-six per cent. in 1870, and, later, eighty-five per cent. The

aggregate of fraudulent bills, after April 5, 1870, was, in the rest of that year, about \$12,250,000, and in 1871, \$3,400,000. Nearly fifteen and three-quarter millions of fraudulent bills were the booty grasped on the 5th of April, 1870. Fourteen, perhaps fifteen millions of it was sheer plunder."

MR. TILDEN UNDAUNTED BY THREATS.

Such was the gigantic and corrupt power which Mr. TILDEN, Mr. O'Connor and their associates undertook to conquer, to drive out of office and bring to punishment. As might have been expected, the fight was a most desperate one. Mr. TILDEN was then leader in the Democratic State organization. Tweed threatened to depose him, and sought in various ways to intimidate him. He was told that he would break up the Democratic organization in the State if he persisted, and they threatened to read him out of the party for not sustaining what was called the regular ticket. But Mr. TILDEN says: "I told the State Convention, being the nominal head of the Democratic party of this State, for the sake of perfect frankness and distinctness, and in order that I might not be misunderstood—I told them that I felt it to be my duty to oppose any man who would not go for making the government of this city what it ought to be, at whatever cost, at whatever sacrifice. If they did not deem that 'regular' I would resign as Chairman of the State Committee and take my place in the ranks of my plundered fellow-citizens and help them to fight their battle of emancipation."

Mr. TILDEN appealed to the whole party, and says: "It is to the eternal honor of the Democratic masses of this State that on the issues thus made with me successively for a whole year they gave me an overwhelming support."

THE RING EXPOSED AND DRIVEN FROM POWER.

The battle against the "Ring" was indeed a fierce and desperate one, and many able gentlemen and powerful societies, including the Bar Association and the Union

League Club, lent their aid; but when Mr. TILDEN entered the field, it was like the advent of Achilles in the battles before Troy. He was ever found in the hottest of the fight and his shield bore the marks of many a well-aimed blow; but, like Achilles, he was invincible. By his own personal prowess he turned the tide of battle, and all opposition gave way before the resistless power of his mighty arm. His presence at once stimulated his companions and dismayed his enemies. His was the thunderbolt that not only burned and blasted, but cast a flash of light which produced consternation and terror in his adversaries.

The result of these efforts was that the members of the Ring were detected, exposed and driven from the companionship of decent people—some of them went to exile, some to prison and ultimately to miserable deaths. This included judges who were impeached and disgraced, against whom was no stronger foe and more energetic prosecutor than the Bar itself. These impeachments were only successful through the efforts of Mr. TILDEN. Speaking of the impeachment of these corrupt Tweed Ring Judges, Mr. Charles O'Connor said that: "it was all TILDEN's work and no one else. TILDEN went to the Legislature and forced the impeachment against every imaginable obstacle, open and covert, political and personal." Mr. John Bigelow writes that "the speech of Mr. TILDEN in the Assembly carried the resolution of impeachment almost with unanimity in a body nine-tenths of which were accessible to the influence employed by the culprits."

This achievement is at once the highest evidence of great ability, courage, perseverance and patriotism. It will remain a monument to his glory to the remotest time.

HIS SERVICES AS GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.

All these great services of Mr. TILDEN produced the profoundest impression upon the people. The necessity for great reforms in public affairs existed, and Mr. Tilden was

extensively regarded as the man of all others for the Gubernatorial Chair of the State of New York. It was not without difficulty that Mr. Tilden could be persuaded to accept the nomination. It was to give up the entire independence of his private life and enter upon a most formidable contest. To accept it, with his reputation as the enemy of all corruption and abuses in governmental matters, was to become at once the champion of reform. It would be a declaration of war against a large host, who fattened upon political corruption, and would bring them in solid masses against him. Besides that, General Dix, the then Governor, a most worthy and popular man, would be his principal opponent as the Republican nominee, and he had been elected two years before by a plurality of 53,451. He still retained the halo of the war about him, and was capable of raising great enthusiasm. Under all these adverse circumstances, Mr. TILDEN at last consented to accept the Democratic nomination, and he was triumphantly elected Governor by a plurality over General Dix of 53,315.

His messages, as Governor, constitute a series of state papers, able, profound, useful, convincing and most practical. He introduced and carried out the most valuable reforms; he vetoed and defeated a mass of corrupt special legislation.

After the most vigorous conflict he exposed and overthrew the great "Canal Ring," and introduced generally in the State a condition of reform and reduction of taxation, and inaugurated a good government for the benefit of the people, in the broadest sense.

HIS NOMINATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY.

But I must not dwell longer on these matters, however interesting they may be to every lover of a good and pure government, but must hurry on to the last and most important event in the life of Mr. TILDEN—his nomination and election as President of the United States.



Mr. TILDEN had been a close observer of public events. He had watched with the greatest attention and interest the civil war; he had carefully observed our common country emerging from a dreadful condition of fraternal strife to peace; he noted the demoralizing effect of war upon the whole community, and he saw with a statesman's eye the movements of the Federal Government and those conducting it. He became alarmed and sounded the note of warning. In a speech which he delivered at Syracuse, in 1874, he said: "The Federal Government is drifting into greater dangers and greater evils. It is rushing onward in a career of centralism, absorbing all governmental powers and assuming to manage all the affairs of human society. It undertakes to direct the business of individuals by tariffs not intended for legitimate taxation; granting special privileges and fostering monopolies at the expense of the people. It has acquired control of all banks. It has threatened to seize on all the telegraphs. It is claiming jurisdiction of all railroad corporations chartered by the States, and amenable to the just authority of the States. It is going on to usurp control of all our schools and colleges. * * * These tendencies must be stopped, or before we know it the whole character of our Government will be changed. The simple and free institutions of our fathers will have become the worst Government that has ever ruled over a civilized people."

It was under such circumstances and with such views that Mr. TILDEN came to be the nominee of the National Democratic party for President of the United States.

THE CRIME BY WHICH HE WAS DEFEATED.

Now, when nearly nine years have passed away, the excitement gone and all the facts and history of the time before us, can we not truthfully say that not only the entire Democratic party, but most of the moderate and fair-minded Republicans, believe that Mr. TILDEN really secured at the election of November 7, 1876, a popular majority of 250,000,

and a majority of the Electoral College of thirty-seven? At that time it was so announced; the news went broadcast throughout the land. But amidst the general rejoicing of the Democracy and the depressing confessions of defeat of the Republicans, orders came from the leaders of the latter to call a halt. They saw a chance for the commission of a successful fraud. The prize was too great to be yielded without an effort. They had too long drank the sweet juices of political power to have it wrested from them without a contest. They had in full operation a system of management and power, by which they had controlled a number of the States, and particularly Florida and Louisiana.

Florida had given Tilden and Hendricks *four* electors, Louisiana had given *eight* and South Carolina *seven*, making in these three States *nineteen* electors for Tilden and Hendricks. It was necessary that a grand larceny should be committed which would take all these from Tilden and Hendricks, and even then Hayes and Wheeler would have a majority of only *one*. The facilities of the Republican party for the accomplishment of this high crime against free government and of this treason to Democratic institutions were great. The counting of the votes of these States and the declaration of the results was entrusted to certain "Returning Boards," most of whom were unscrupulous men and political tramps of most unclean antecedents. They were well fitted for "treasons, stratagems and spoils," and were ready without scruple or remorse to commit any crime at their master's bidding.

THE WORK OF THE RETURNING BOARD.

By a series of illegal acts and unwarranted methods they committed their predetermined crime, and counted out the candidates really elected, and gave the certificates to the defeated Electors. That the vote of Florida was most unrighteously wrested from Tilden and Hendricks was not only fully ascertained and declared by the Legislature of that

State, but was judicially determined by the Courts after a long and careful examination, upon legal evidence. The Democratic Governor, who had been counted out also with Tilden and Hendricks, was legally awarded his office, was inaugurated and performed the duties for the full term.

The case of Louisiana was, if possible, still more flagrant. The pretended statements and affidavits on which the Returning Board threw out 13,000 votes that had been cast for Tilden and Hendricks "were falsely fabricated and forged by certain disreputable persons, under the direction and with the knowledge of the Returning Board," and were fraudulently antedated; and proof of these facts were offered before the Electoral Commission.

While these acts of outrage and fraud were being performed by these Returning Boards the whole country was becoming excited and alarmed.

A great contest arose at Washington about the counting of the electoral votes and the declaring of the result. From the beginning of our Government the votes had been counted by both Houses of Congress, but now the Republican party claimed that the whole power to count the votes and declare the result was vested in the President of the Senate, thus constituting him alone the tribunal of last resort to judge of all contested questions.

INTENSE EXCITEMENT AT WASHINGTON.

It is impossible now to picture the great excitement that prevailed at the seat of government, as well as generally throughout the country. A great peril seemed impending. We had but a few years before emerged from one civil war, and another seemed imminent. Men stood by their party leaders. The feeling was most intense. A little spark might raise an inextinguishable fire. The Government was in the hands of a military chieftan who was indebted for his place and power to the party seeking to perpetuate and carry out this stupendous fraud. It was natural that he should follow

the leadership of his own party, and, being uneducated in the science of civil government, he should be impelled by the instincts of military power.

He at once concentrated at the capital a large body of the regular army, of which by the Constitution and laws he was Commander-in-Chief. A vast corps of office-holders also stood ready to obey any order of their superiors. It was under such circumstances that the leaders of the Democratic party consented to the Electoral Commission, devised by a joint committee of the two Houses of Congress, to consist of fifteen members—five Senators, five Representatives and five Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. To the Commission thus constituted the whole question was to be submitted.

THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION AND ITS WORK.

When the Electoral Commission was agreed to by the Democrats, it was, of course, assumed that that lofty tribunal, acting before the world on the great and momentous questions to be submitted to it, would exercise to the fullest extent the ample jurisdiction with which it was invested, to ascertain the whole truth and determine who, in very fact, had received the majorities of the legal votes of the contested States. No one could have believed that tribunal would have refused to hear the truth, and, by a party vote of eight Republicans to seven Democrats, announce how easily fraud may be made inviolable and crime unimpeachable, and how great outrages against the electoral franchise, once perpetrated and clothed in the forms of law, can make and unmake Presidents.

Our own fellow-citizen, Mr. Justice Field of the Supreme Court of the United States, was one of the Electoral Commission, and from first to last maintained the rights of Tilden and Hendricks. With his clear mind, broad views and unanswerable logic, he demonstrated the power and duty of the Commission to throw aside all narrow and mere technical

theories; to enter upon the open field of inquiry; to be guided alone by a sincere desire to find the truth, and to give the award to him who alone in very fact received the highest number of votes. But to the amazement of the world that great tribunal by its vote of eight to seven forbade the investigation. It would not do to say that the members of the Commission, Democrats as well as Republicans, were always guided by partisan views. It still remains the fact that the Republicans refused to permit the evidence of the frauds to be heard, and would not permit the investigation to be made. Thus the Democrats, with plenary proof of the infamous frauds perpetrated, with the most convincing evidence that a great crime against the elective franchise had been committed, were met by the unrelenting decision of the inexorable eight Republicans that the immaculate certificates of the Returning Boards were conclusive on the American people and unimpeachable by the highest Court that this country ever knew. The crystallized fraud had become insoluble; the steel-clad crime was no longer penetrable by human power; the people, who by a majority of over a quarter of a million, had cast their votes for the Tilden and Hendricks Electors, could only exclaim, like poor Juliet in Shakspeare's great drama,

" Past hope, past cure, past help."

MR. TILDEN'S PATRIOTIC FORBEARANCE. .

But this event, however deplorable it was, shows the strength of the American Government. Such a crisis in any other country could not have passed without a civil war, great distress and widespread disaster.

Here the Government passed from Mr. TILDEN, the true President, to Mr. Hayes; yet not one drop of blood was shed, no panic in commercial circles, no ruin to any one. Mr. TILDEN has been at times severely criticised by some for his acquiescence in the Electoral Commission and its results. It was thought by many of his friends that he should have gone to

Washington and claimed the office, and rallying around him the great party who by more than 250,000 of a popular majority had elected him, force a recognition of his rights. But Mr. TILDEN was too great a patriot to consent to any measure which would result in a new civil war and too great a lover of his fellow-man to join in any scheme of anarchy. His courage had been too often tested to be doubted. Though he disclaimed responsibility for the creation of the Electoral Commission, he accepted, as the Democracy at large did, the decision, and with patriotic forbearance acquiesced in the result, feeling at the same time how great an outrage had been perpetrated and how deep a wound had been given to the "vital principle of self-government through elections by the people."

Mr. TILDEN in his home as a private citizen was far greater and more admired and esteemed by the great mass of the American people than was his successful opponent, who trod the great halls of the White House and wore the robes of Chief Magistrate of the Nation, rightfully belonging to Mr. TILDEN. But Patroclus clothed in the armor of Achilles was not Achilles. Beneath the armor was not the strength, the prowess or the great soul of the true owner.

TILDEN AND CLEVELAND COMPARED.

Mr. TILDEN declined a renomination by the National Democratic Convention at Cincinnati in 1880, and thereafter lived the life of a private citizen. But in that privacy he was still the oracle of his party. His home was the political Mecca to which statesmen wended their way in reverential mood, and each came away feeling wiser and better for the pilgrimage. His views on public affairs and his political teachings have become widely disseminated among the statesmen of the country. Can we not trace, in the heroic efforts of President Cleveland in his great work of reform, the spirit and influence of Mr. TILDEN? It is no disparagement of the President, whom we all so much admire for his steadfast advance in the battle for a pure and good government for

the sake of the whole people, to say that he wages a war first inaugurated by Mr. TILDEN, and such as his is would have been the administration of Mr. TILDEN. The two had much in common—each the same fixed and positive views on great public questions; each actuated by the purest motives for good of the country; each inflexible in his purpose to accomplish his ends.

BEQUEST TO THE PEOPLE.

Mr. TILDEN's latest thoughts were still of his fellow-men, and a magnificent bequest for the use of the people at large manifested his determination to extend his usefulness, even beyond the period of his own life.

PERORATION.

Though his health, for some years before his death, was greatly impaired, and his physical frame much shattered, his mind retained all its pristine powers until the last moment of his existence. Like a grand diamond, it still shone with undiminished brilliancy, though its setting was gradually wearing away. It was like the heroic Marius sitting amid the ruins of Carthage. It was the immortal part of man standing like a lofty pyramid amidst the drifting sands of mortality.

The name of Mr. TILDEN will be remembered as long as patriotism is deemed a virtue and high moral worth finds a place in human estimation. Around many of his contemporaries there may be a glamour of military glory or a halo of transient light, but he stands among the foremost, resting in solid grandeur upon a broad foundation of established greatness. Fame has already unrolled her sacred scroll, emblazoned with the names of her illustrious sons, and has inscribed there, in close companionship with her mighty dead, the name of SAMUEL JONES TILDEN, the patriot and statesman.



